1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

771 pers is evident at the festival of The Dragon King of the Lake, in no way a goddess, and at that of Tung Yueh the Taoist King of the Underworld.

It is certain that there is, especially among the educated class, a feeling that worship of the gods should be left to women, but this idea is not sufficiently precise to give rise to rigid rules or taboos. On the other hand the rites of Ancestor Worship need a man to be performed, and cannot be left to the inclination or piety of women. Only a male descendant can make the sacrifices to the ancestral spirits, and failing sons a man must adopt a nephew or a distant relative to perform these rites. The elaborate rituals which are described in ancient Chinese literature, and which are or were, perhaps practised in modern times by great families in other parts of China, form no part of Min Chia practice. Ancestor Worship can be divided into a simple daily rite, and a few more ceremonial occasions recurring on fixed dates in the year.

769 353 Every family has an ancestral altar, usually a long table, which may be set up in the principal reception room on the ground floor of the house, or, often, in the long bare upper room, which by poor families is also used as a store room. On the table stand three ancestral tablets, representing the heads of the family in the previous three generations, and these are flanked by vases of flowers, and a few ornaments, with an incense burner in front. Sometimes, rather incongrously, a statue of Kuan Yin also finds a place on this altar. On the wall behind the altar red paper strips bearing the characters for Heaven and Earth are pasted, these rather vague powers, once worshipped by the Emperors, being 769 thus associated with the ancestral spirits. Before the morn- 788 ing and evening meals one of the male members of the household, usually the son of the house, comes to the altar, strikes a gong, and lights a stick of incense in the burner before the

a k'ang on the outside wall opposite the door. It is a couch raised about 60 - 70 /centimeters/ from the floor, made of bricks and hollow inside. The hollow area is equipped with drafts and serves as a stove which is fed from an opening in the outside wall.

dug through the floor. Fire can be kindled in these and they are connected with the hearth so that the fire gets sufficient draft. /21/

The furnishings are placed chiefly along the wall where the tent roof slopes down and where the tent is thus lower. On the rear wall of the right side, next to the place where the fuel is kept, 1/2 meter above the floor, is the family altar, a simple rectangular wooden box about 1/2 meter high, 40 centimeters deep and 1 1/2 meters long. On this family altar stand bronze statues of the Buddha and small bowls for holy water. The rest of the space along the tent wall is chiefly filled with bags made of coarse yak hair, in which provisions are stored, with dried yak and sheep dung, with saddle gear for horses and yaks, and with skins. Guns are often kept on a separate stand. Dried meat and yak maws in which butter is stored are hung from the ceiling of the tent. A section of the right side of the tent is sometimes closed off by boards not more than 20 centimeters high and covered with dog skins. This serves as a special resting place.

The women's section on the left contains first of all the utensils needed for the dairy. These are chiefly three cylindrical wooden tubs 1 to 1 1/2 meters high and 75 centimeters in diameter, whose staves are held together by hoops made of withes. One of these tubs, usually the smallest, nearest the rear wall, is used to store the sour milk. In the center is the butter cask; nearest the front, a large milk tub. The tub containing the butter is closed at the top and has a hole through which runs a long, heavy stamper. Suspended from the ceiling of the tent, above the milk tub, is a bag of coarse material, through which the whey can be strained from the curds.

Next to the tent a short stake is driven into the ground, to which the watch dog is tied. In front of many tents there are also one or two poles 3 meters high with lines from which hang prayer pennants. Very occasionally there is a simple round sheepfold next to the tent, made of boards and poles.

The winter houses are also very primitive. They are usually /22/ placed along the rear wall of a courtyard enclosed by mud walls two meters high. The only opening in the enclosure is a gate in the

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obo and in the lamasery on identical days of the year.

The day of the obo festival is also celebrated as the birthday of fu-yeh. My interpreter, trying to make clear to me the relationship between obo and fu-yeh, once compared the obo with a p'ai-wei, i. e., a Chinese ancestral tablet, since the deceased fu-yeh is thought of as dwelling in the obo as well as in the Western paradise.

On New Year's, on the fourth day of the first Chinese month, to be exact, a festival is held in the temple of the lamasery. On this occasion fireworks are set off in honor of the deceased incarnations. At the same time there is a festival at the obo to invoke the mountain spirit. On this occasion butter, tea, a wether (!) and cypress wood are sacrificed. A piece of meat from each of the four extremities and the breast, the ears and the lower jaw are burned with the cypress wood, to indicate that in reality the entire animal has been sacrificed. This offering is made in order to safeguard man and beast and protect the country from war. Thus Lamaistic religious practices are here combined with animal sacrifice which stands in sharp contrast to actual Buddhism. (1)

1. Schröder's 8) account of the mountain spirit of the Tujen in the Sining region is very noteworthy for the manifold combinations which the spirit inhabiting the obo can take on: "The mountain spirit is bound to a certain locale and has its stronghold, its permanent dwelling, in the obo. It can enter the shaman as an assistant spirit, and take possession of him in a trance. The earth god also has its dwelling in the obo; it is in the layer of earth."

It is also characteristic for the syncretism of folk religion and Lamaism that sorcerers (böm-bu) as well as lamas can offer sacrifices at the obo.

Whereas the ami living in the obo are tutelary spirits of the entire tribe, each family also venerates special guardian spirits within their tent. These might be compared to the ancient Roman lares familiares. My Chinese interpreter called them Chia-shen (house gods, Tibetan: Yu-la). (1) There are no images of them.

1. However, compare Hermanns, page 48.

Instead, a bunch of hair from various animals hangs in the left rear

Mewu

corner of the /48/ tent, which is the home of Yu-la. The fur of all kinds of domestic animals is used, and a tuft of hair is plucked out of each animal for this purpose before it is sold or slaughtered. Thus the bundle constantly increases in size. After a meal, tea, butter, and milk are smeared on the bundle of hair for the house god.

On the altar which is found in every tent stand small statues made of bronze or brass of the Lamaistic deities. The god that seems to be most popular here is called Dzam-la. He corresponds, allegedly, to Ts'ai-shen, the god of wealth (2) of the Chinese popular re-

2. Compare Wadell, page 370.

ligion; in accordance with Lamaistic custom, water is regularly offered to this god. Another god much venerated is one that is thought of as dwelling in hell and judging the souls of the dead. He corresponds to the Chinese Yen-lo-wang. The "horse god" (Chinese: Ma-wang-yeh, Tibetan: dam-dzen) who is also worshiped in the Lamaistic temples is offered sacrifices by the sorcerers, especially when there is threat of war. He has three heads and is represented in union with its Cakti (female principle). Ts'ai-shen and Chia-shen are worshiped by men and women alike.

I did not learn anything about a worship of the heavens among the Fantzu, nor of the sun, moon and stars.

After death the soul of the deceased can turn into an evil spirit. It can descend into hell (Tibetan: nal-wa), where it is adjudicated by the judge of hell (Yen-lo-wang, Yama). But just as in China, there is a parallel belief in Buddhistic transmigration of souls, and no one is aware of any inconsistency. If a person has led a good life, he can be reborn as an incarnation (fu-yeh), if he has been bad, he becomes a woman or an animal (bovine, horse, ox, sheep). Here the belief in the transmigration of souls is sometimes confused with the belief in evil spirits into which the souls of persons who have died a violent death are transformed.

/49/ A characteristic incident had just occurred among the Mewu-Fantzu:

The t'ou-mu of the Mewu-Fantzu had a younger brother with whom he had quarreled seven or eight years before about the rule of a group of Fantzu. He had had the brother treacherously killed one day when the latter was riding across the steppes. A short time afterwards, groundhogs dug a passage behind the t'ou-mu's house with an opening inside the enclosure of his property. This was a surprising

787 when the crime can be discovered and in what direction one must
792 travel to capture the criminal.

The strange blend of folk religion and Buddhism or Lamaism is
177 expressed very clearly, for example, in the ideas which the Mewu-
777 Fantzu have about life after death. On the one hand, they worship their ancestors, and apparently believe that the souls of these dwell in some form near the tent, since that is where offerings are regularly presented, and they also fear the evil spirits into which the souls of people having died a violent death are transformed. On the other hand, the Buddhist belief in transmigration of souls, whereby the soul can be reborn as a human being or animal, is commonly accepted. Thus our above description of the odd fear of the Mewu-Fantzu chieftain that the soul of his brother may have entered a groundhog, and his subsequent decree that groundhogs were not to be shot, was probably based on the confused blend of a belief in the transmigration of souls and in the danger of spirits of human beings who have died a violent death.

353 /60/ The cult at the family altar belongs primarily to Lamaistic
778 religion. In every tent the altar is on the right (male) side, at an
177 elevation of 1/2 meter above the ground, behind the hearth and next to the place where the fuel is piled up. It is a simple, rectangular wooden box that is 1/2 meter high, 40 centimeters deep and 1 1/2 meters long. In the middle of the altar there stands a small brass statue of Buddha, with three larger and three smaller bowls of water to the left, and four larger and four smaller ones to the right. These bowls are supposed to correspond to holes in the heart of Buddha. On the family altar of a bŏm-bu there are, as we have said, also prayer books, a large Chinese brush and a row of copper coins.

262 The numerous food taboos go back to Buddhist influence. The
177 Fantzu abstain altogether from eating the meat of horses, mules, donkeys and dogs, all fowl and fish, as well as eggs. At present the meat of groundhogs is also forbidden (1). They eat the meat

1. also pork, see above, page 25.

of sheep and yaks, but these animals are not killed in the ordinary way; they are strangled, and thus the crime of shedding blood is avoided.

782 Prayer runs through the entire daily life of the Fantzu. It is usually limited to the Lamaistic formula: "Omi mani padme hum." This they mumble especially while fingering their beads and if